

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS POLICY

The Company adopts a zero tolerance policy towards the use of alcohol and drugs by any members of its staff whilst working on behalf of the Company. Smoking is illegal anywhere on Company Premises (defined for the purposes of this policy as any place or venue in which the Company conducts their business) and any impairment of ability caused by alcohol or drugs is viewed as a serious safety matter and may be dealt with as part of the disciplinary procedure.

PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Alcohol or drug abuse can damage the health and well-being of employees and have far-reaching effects on their personal and working lives. At work, alcohol or drug misuse can result in reduced levels of attendance, sub-standard work performance and increased health and safety risks, not only for the individual concerned but also for others.
- 1.2 Furthermore, the effects of alcohol or drugs misuse are likely to be detrimental to the organisation's reputation and image.
- 1.3 This policy applies to ALL employees.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 This policy aims to:
 - 2.1.1 raise awareness of the risks and potential harm to health associated with abuse of intoxicating substances;
 - 2.1.2 set out the rules regarding the use of intoxicating substances so that employees are aware of the likely consequences of using them;
 - 2.1.3 provide a framework to enable instances of substance misuse by employees to be handled in an appropriate, fair and consistent manner;
 - 2.1.4 achieve a balance between supporting employees who come forward with a problem and the overriding need to preserve:
 - (a) the health, safety and welfare of employees and others with whom they come into contact;
 - (b) staff discipline; and
 - (c) the Company's reputation.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy covers the use and misuse of intoxicating substances, which include alcohol, solvents, legal and illegal drugs, prescription and over-the-counter medicines and other substances that could adversely affect work performance and/or health and safety.
- 3.2 The Company has a zero tolerance policy to intoxication in the work place. This includes the lasting effects of substances consumed outside of the workplace.

3.3 The Company also expects agency and casual workers, contractors, volunteers and others working on its behalf to comply with this policy. Failure to do so is likely to result in their working arrangements being terminated.

4. **Managers' Responsibilities**

4.1 **Managers and Heads of Department (HOD)** are required to:

4.1.1 be aware of the signs of alcohol and drugs (mis)use and the effects on performance and health of employees;

4.1.2 high levels of absenteeism including:

- (a) instances of unauthorised leave;
- (b) frequent Saturday/Monday absences;
- (c) frequent sickness not associated with any known or diagnosed medical condition;
- (d) leaving work early;
- (e) lateness;
- (f) excessive levels of absence due to sickness; or
- (g) strange or suspicious reasons for absence.

4.1.3 high accident level:

- (a) at work;
- (b) elsewhere – e.g. driving, at home.

4.1.4 diminished work performance, including:

- (a) difficulty in concentration;
- (b) tasks requiring increased effort;
- (c) individual tasks taking more time;
- (d) loss of memory or energy.

4.1.5 mood swings:

- (a) irritability;
- (b) depression;
- (c) general confusion.

4.1.6 aggressive behaviour or other conduct issues;

- 4.1.7 seek to ensure that staff understand this policy and are aware of the rules and consequences regarding abuse of alcohol, drugs and other intoxicating substances;
 - 4.1.8 ensure that staff are aware of the support that is available to them should they have a problem;
 - 4.1.9 intervene at an early stage where changes in performance, behaviour, sickness levels or attendance patterns are identified to establish whether alcohol or drugs misuse is an underlying cause.
- 4.2 Where a Head of Department is aware, or suspects, that an employee is misusing intoxicating substances they must contact their Line Manager to seek advice on the approach to be adopted without delay.
 - 4.3 Such matters will be treated confidentially as far as legitimately possible. For example, it may be necessary in order to provide effective support for information to be shared with others, e.g. Occupational Health Provider or other agencies.

5. **Support available to employees**

Staff who have an alcohol or drug-related problem are encouraged to seek help at an early stage. In so far as possible, the Company will treat alcohol or drug related problems in a similar way to other health issues and will provide support where possible with a view to a return to normal duties. However, the Company will not under any circumstances tolerate intoxication at work and serious or repeated misconduct related to drug or alcohol problems will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

6. **Employees' responsibilities**

- 6.1 Employees must not consume alcohol or drugs at any time whilst at work. Exceptions may apply to drugs prescribed for the individual or over-the-counter medicines used for their intended purpose (in accordance with the instructions given by the prescriber, pharmacist or manufacturer).
- 6.2 Employees may take prescription or over the counter medications in accordance with the instructions included with those medications and those of the employee's doctor or pharmacist. Employees must notify their Line Manager immediately should they be prescribed medication or plan to take over-the-counter medicines that may cause side effects and impair their ability to undertake their duties safely and effectively (employees are not obliged to disclose the actual medical condition being treated).
- 6.3 Employees must not consume alcohol or drugs before coming on duty or when they may be required to attend work at short notice, for example when they are on call.
- 6.4 Intoxicating substances such as alcohol may remain in the system for some time and even small amounts can impair performance and jeopardise safety. Employees are personally responsible for allowing sufficient time for intoxicating substances to leave their system before reporting for work. Employees must not attend work with intoxicating substances within their system.
- 6.5 Employees may consume alcohol at work-related events or activities that take place at the end of an individual's working day after which they are not returning to work. However, alcohol should be consumed in moderation.

- 6.6 Employees are not permitted to possess, store, trade or sell illegal drugs on Company Premises, whilst on Company business outside of Company Premises or to bring the organisation into disrepute by engaging in such activities outside work.
- 6.7 Employees are expected to co-operate with any support and assistance provided by the organisation to address an alcohol or drugs problem.
- 6.8 Employees should not, even with the best of motives, 'cover up' or collude with a colleague with an alcohol or drugs misuse problem.
- 6.9 Where an individual concerned does not wish to come forward to seek help and their colleague(s) genuinely suspect that the individual may be misusing alcohol and/or drugs, the colleague(s) should raise their concerns with their Line Manager.

7. Breaches of the Policy

- 7.1 Although the organisation will, where appropriate to do so, adopt a constructive and supportive approach when dealing with employees who may be experiencing alcohol or drugs dependency/addiction, if performance, attendance or behaviour is unacceptable, disciplinary action up to dismissal may be unavoidable. Examples of issues that will be subject to disciplinary action, up to dismissal, are:
 - 7.1.1 disregard for personal safety or the safety of others;
 - 7.1.2 unacceptable behaviour in the workplace;
 - 7.1.3 consumption of intoxicating substances whilst at work;
 - 7.1.4 possession, dealing/trafficking, selling, storage of controlled drugs either on Company Premises or engaging in such activities outside work;
 - 7.1.5 making malicious or vexatious allegations that a colleague is misusing intoxicating substances.
- 7.2 Where evidence warrants, the organisation will inform the police of illegal drug use or any activity or behaviour over which there are concerns as to its legality. For example, it would be necessary to report drink driving or possession of illegal drugs.

8. Suspicion

- 8.1 Suspicions of a member of staff being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs during working hours should be reported immediately to the relevant HOD. HODs receiving such reports or suspecting an employee to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs should:
 - 8.1.1 review the basis for the suspicion and speak to the individual privately and ask if they require a witness;
 - 8.1.2 inform the individual of their concern that the employee is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs and the reasons for this belief;
 - 8.1.3 listen to any representation the employee makes;
 - 8.1.4 make notes of the discussion.

8.2 If the HOD considers the employee to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs and unfit for duty, the manager may suspend the employee on full pay. In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to send the employee home, but not under suspension. The disciplinary procedure may then be implemented.

9. **Searches and testing**

9.1 We reserve the right to conduct searches for drugs on our premises, including, but not limited to, searches of lockers, filing cabinets and desks, bags, clothing, packages.

9.2 Any drugs found as a result of a search will be confiscated and action may be taken under the Company's Disciplinary Procedure.

9.3 Where the Company suspects that an employee may be intoxicated at work, that employee may be asked to consent to a drug test or breathalyser test. If this test reveals that drugs or alcohol have been consumed, action may be taken under the Company's Disciplinary Procedure.

No part of this policy overrides the Company's Disciplinary Procedure.

Contact details for outside support agencies.

Alcohol Dependence

Drinkline

Helpline: 0800 917 8282

Drinkline runs a free, confidential helpline for people who are concerned about their own drinking, or someone else's.

NHS Choices Website

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Alcohol-misuse/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

National Health Service advice page.

Drinkaware

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

Drinkaware works to reduce alcohol misuse and harm in the UK.

Addaction

<https://www.addaction.org.uk/default.asp>

Addaction is the UK's leading drug and alcohol charity, helping over 40,000 people a year to recover from their addiction problems.

Al-Anon

<http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk>

Provide support to anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking, regardless of whether that person is still drinking or not.

Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

AA is an organisation of men and women who share their experience with each other hoping to solve their problems and help others to recover from alcoholism